

Message Text

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TAGS: PINT, BE
SUBJECT: BELGIAN COMMUNIST PARTY: VICE PRESIDENT JEAN TERFVE DIES;
PRESENT LEADERSHIP

REF: BRUSSELS A-24

1. JEANTERFEVE, ONE OF THE THREE VICE PRESIDENTS OF THE BCP, DIED APRIL 17 AT THE AGE OF 71.
2. TERFVE WAS ONE OF THE LEADING LIGHTS OF THE BCP FOR OVER 35 YEARS, THOUGH HIS LEADERSHIP ROLE IN THE LAST FEW YEARS WAS LARGELY HONORIFIC. TERFVE WAS A LAWYER AND JOINED THE BCP IN 1935. ARRESTED BY THE NAZIS, HE ESCAPED, AND AT THE WAR'S END WAS HEAD OF THE COMMUNIST RESISTANCE MOVEMENT. HE BECAME A MEMBER OF THE BCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE IN 1943 AND DIRECTED THE BCP DAILY, LE DRAPEAU ROUGE, AFTER THE LIBERATION AND FOR MANY YEARS THEREAFTER. HE WAS A NATIONAL DEPUTY 1946-1948, AND WAS MINISTER FOR RECONSTRUCTION 1946-7 IN TWO SOCIALIST-LIBERAL-COMMUNIST COALITION GOVERNMENTS. IN THE MID-1950S HE DIRECTED THE BCP REPRESENTATIVES IN PARLIAMENT AND TOWARDS THE END OF HIS CAREER DEVOTED HIS ATTENTION TO IDEOLOGICAL MATTERS AND TO INTERNATIONAL CAUSES (E.G. THE FRONT ORGANIZATION RELATED TO CSCE: THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE).

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3. HIS DISAPPEARANCE WILL THUS HAVE LITTLE EFFECT ON THE LEADERSHIP OR ORIENTATION OF THE BCP, THOUGH THE PARTY HAS LOST ONE OF ITS FEW NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED AND EVEN RESPECTED FIGURES.
4. THE PRESENT BCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE OFFICERS, ELECTED JAN. 29, 1977 ARE AS FOLLOWS:

PRESIDENCY

LOUIS VAN GEYT - NATIONAL PRESIDENT
CLAUDE RENARD - VICE PRESIDENT
JEF TURF - VICE PRESIDENT
POLITBURO

JEAN BLUME
URBAIN COUSSEMENT
MARCEL COUTEAU
JAN DEBROUWERE
ALBERT DE CONINCK
AUGUSTIN DUCHATEAU
ROBERT DUSSART
GEORGES GLYNEUR
CLAUDE RENARD
JEF TURF
LOUIS VAN GEYT
JACK WITHAGES

NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

MARCEL COUTEAU
ALBERT DE CONINCK
CLAUDE RENARD
JEF TURF

THERE ARE 58 MEMBERS OF THE BCP CENTRAL COMMITTEE FROM WHICH THE
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ABOVE WERE ELECTED.

5. TOTAL ESTIMATED MEMBERSHIP IN THE BCP NOW IS 8200. IN 1975
BCP MEMBERSHIP WAS ESTIMATED AT 10,000 OF WHICH AN ESTIMATED 1,000
WERE "MILITANTS", I.E. THEY ATTENDED MEETINGS.
6. EVEN WITHIN THIS SMALL COMMUNIST PARTY THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT
SIGNS OF STRAIN. THREE FACTIONS ARE APPARENT: (A) THE LIEGE
FEDERATION, HEADED BY MARCEL LEVAUX, WHICH IS STALINIST IN OUTLOOK;
(B) THE MAJORITY OF THE BCP, HEADED BY VAN GEYT, BUT MORE AND
MORE INFLUENCED BY VICE PRESIDENT RENARD (REFAIR); AND (C) THE
DRAPEAU ROUGE STAFF. SOME FORMER STAFFERS OF THE DRAPEAU ROUGE
HAVE ENTIRELY QUIT OR BEEN OUSTED FROM THE BCP (BRUSSELS A-20);
SOME OTHERS WITH LIBERAL VIEWS REMAIN AND SPORADICALLY HANDLE THE
NEWS OR MAKE COMMENTARY IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE BCP LEADERSHIP HAS
PUBLICLY CRITICIZED IT (77 BRUSSELS A-134). THE CURRENT LEADERS
OF THE DRAPEAU ROUGE ARE ROSINE LEWIN , EDITOR IN CHIEF,
AND SUSA NUDELHOLE, POLITICAL DIRECTOR, BOTH MEMBERS OF THE BCP CENTR
AL
COMMITTEE. NUDELHOLE'S INFLUENCE IS PROBABLY NOT GREAT AS HIS VIEWS,
PUBLISHED FROM TIME TO TIME IN SIGNED EDITORIALS, APPEAR
DISTINCTLY HARD LINE.
7. COMMENT: THAT THE BCP IS GOING NOWHERE IN A PERIOD OF SEVERE
ECONOMIC RECESSION IS INDICATIVE OF ITS PRESENT INFLUENCE AND

POLITICAL POTENTIAL. THAT IS NOT TO SAY, HOWEVER, THAT SOME
SOVIET-SPONSORED POSITIONS (E.G. ON THE ERW), WHICH ARE STRONGLY
SUPPORTED BY THE BCP, DO NOT HAVE INFLUENCE ON BELGIAN PUBLIC
OPINION. CHAMBERS

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